IMPROVING THE PRONUNCIATION OF ALVEOPALATAL SOUNDS THROUGH MINIMAL PAIRS

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Abstract

This research was aimed at proving that the use of minimal pairs in teaching pronunciation can improve the ability of the seventh grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Balinggi. This research applied a true experimental research with 56 students as the sample. It was selected by using a cluster random sampling technique. The instrument of data collection was a test divided into pre-test and post-test. The data gathered were analyzed statistically. The result shows that the $t_{counted}$ (4.65) was higher than the t_{table} (0.014) by applying 0.05 level of significance and the degree of freedom (df) 54. It means that minimal pairs technique can significantly improve the pronunciation of the seventh grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Balinggi. In brief, minimal pairs technique is effective to be used to improve the students' ability in learning pronunciation especially alveopalatal sounds.

Keywords: Pronunciation; Alveopalatal; Minimal Pairs; Sounds.

INTRODUCTION

The way we speak immediately conveys something about ourselves to the people around us. Many students, who have studied grammar for many years, still have difficulties to speak like native speakers. It is because they often get problems in learning English. One of their difficulties is pronunciation. As one of the English language components, pronunciation plays an important role in communication. It is suggested to be taught integratedly with other skills in order to develop the students' speaking skill.

The teaching of English is described on Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan for Junior High School (2007:08) as follows:

> Ditinjau dari segi tujuan atau kompetensi yang ingin dicapai maka pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris ini menekankan pada aspek keterampilan berbahasa baik lisan maupun tulisan, baik spesifik maupun produktif di mana pada akhir sekolah

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> lanjutan tingkat pertama siswa diharapkan mampu menggunakan keterampilan berbahasa membaca, berbicara, mendengarkan, dan menulis.

Based on the statement above we can say that pronunciation is not only emphasized to be taught in Junior High School, but also needed to be learnt to support the language skill mastery – it can be integrated to another language skill, namely speaking. It means that students who can pronounce the English words correctlywill be able to speak English well. In other words, pronunciation is needed in developing language skill, especially speaking skill. That is why learning pronunciation for the beginners is very important.

Generally, there are 3 components in learning English. One of them is grammar which is very important to learn because it may help the students to differentiate kind of the text about, whether it is present, future, or past. Many non-native speakers have studied grammar from elementary until university level, but they are not able to pronounce the English words like native speakers. It is because there are many difficulties faced by non-native speakers who learn pronunciation for the first time. It is usually the largest obstacles to overcome when trying to achieve accuracy. One of their difficulties is that the speakers' tongue is not accustomed to pronounce some English sounds. It is because not all of the Indonesian sounds are found in English sounds, for instance, sounds [ʧ], [ʤ], [ʒ], [θ] and [ð]. In this case, Sahulata (1998:70) states, "There are some sounds which are difficult to be pronounced by the Indonesian learners". The reason is that those sounds are not exist in Indonesian, thus the Indonesian learners are not accustomed to pronounce those sounds. When the students pronounce such sounds, they are influenced by their mother tongue and may cause the conversation not running well, while communication needs understanding between speaker and listener.

The difficulties in pronunciation are also faced by the students of SMP Negeri 1 Balinggi. It is difficult for many of them to pronounce some English sounds which are not found in Indonesian, especially sounds [ʧ], [ʒ], [ʤ]. In this case, those three sounds are included in alveopalatal sounds consisting of four sounds. They are sounds [ʃ], [ʧ], [ʒ], [ʤ]. That is why, in this research, the writer chose alveopalatal sounds in improving the students' pronunciation.

Generally, most of the Indonesian students are able to pronounce the alveopalatal sounds. In contrast, it is difficult for most of the students at SMP Negeri 1 Balinggi to pronounce those sounds because the majority of the students are Balinese. Those sounds are

very difficult to pronounce because they are not found in Balinese. It makes their tongues do not get used to pronounce them. Even though those sounds are not found in Balinese, they tend to replace them with the nearest sound. Thus, sounds [ʃ], [ʧ], [ʒ], and [ʤ] are replaced by, [s], [c], [j], and [j]. It is supported by Sudewa (2013:para.3) who says, "There are eighteen basic syllables that are used for writing pure Balinese language". On his writing, he states, "Akehakśarane, 47, luiripun: akśarasuara, 14, akśarawianjana, 33" (there are 47 letters of Balinese, consisting of 14 vowels and 33 consonants). It means that from the 33 consonants of Balinese, only 18 that are commonly used. Those are consonants, ha, na, ca, ra, ka, da, ta, sa, wa, la, ma, ga, ba, nga, pa, ja, ya, nya.

In Indonesian, sounds [ʃ], [ʧ], [ʒ], and [ʤ] tend to be sounds [sy], [c], [z], and [j] like in words ***sy****arat,* ***c****icak,* ***z****aman,* and ***j****alan*. Meanwhile, in Balinese those sounds are replaced by sounds [s], [c], [j], and [j], such as in words *sampat, canang, jajo,* and *jumah*. That is why when some of Balinese students communicate to native speakers by using those English sounds, sometimes the sounds make different meaning because of mispronunciation. For example, words *bu****sh****es* and *mea****s****ure* become *"ba****ss****ist"* and *"ma****j****or"*. The replacement of those sounds can be seen at the table below:

Table 1
The Replacement of the Alveopalatal Sounds in 3 Languages

English		Indonesian		Balinese	
[ʃ]	chef	[sy]	syarat	[s]	sarat
[ʧ]	chin	[c]	cantik	[c]	cantik
[ʤ]	gin	[j]	jujur	[j]	jujur
[ʒ]	measure	[z]	zaman	[j]	jaman

There are many techniques that can be used to improve the pronunciation. In this research, the writer used minimal pair technique. "A minimal pair is a pair of words which differs in only one segment" (Basri, 2005:39). This technique can be used to help the students to contrast pairs of words that have one sound at the same position in the word pairs. It will be easy for them in learning to differentiate the pronunciation of those sounds because this technique uses two different words which differ on one sound only. It is supported by Fromkin et al. (2003:277) who state, "Minimal pair is two words with different meanings that are identical except for one sound segment that occurs in the same place in the string". By using this technique, they can directly practice their pronunciation and learn directly from their mistakes because the teachers correct their mispronunciation directly.

Based on the problem above, the pronunciation of alveopalatal sounds for Balinese students at SMP Negeri 1 Balinggi must be improved in order to make it easy for them to be able to communicate with others by using a good pronunciation. This research was applied to the seventh grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Balinggi because there are many Balinese students. Based on the problem, the writer formulated the problem statement as follow: *Can the use of minimal pair technique improve the pronunciation of alveopalatal sounds of the seventh grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Balinggi?*It is to know that the use of minimal pairs technique can improve the pronunciation of the seventh grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Balinggi.

METHODOLOGY

In conducting the research, the writer applied true-experimental research using two classes. The design of this research is recommended by Tuckman (1999:162) as follows.

R	O_1	X	O_2
R	O_3	X	O_4

Where:

R	:	the difference between pre-test and post-test of experimental and control group
O_1	:	pre-test for experimental group
O_2	:	pre-test for control group
O_3	:	post-test for experimental group
O_2	:	post-test for control group
X	:	treatment

The population of this research was taken from the seventh grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Balinggi and there were two classes that had been observed, they were class E and F. The sample that the writer used was cluster random sampling. The ways used in choosing the samples were; the first, she wrote the name of two classes in two pieces of paper; the second, she put them in a box; the last, she shook the box. The paper which fell out for the first time became the experimental group and the second one was a control group.

There were two variables that the writer used in this research. They were dependent and independent variables. "A dependent variable is an attribute or characteristic that is dependent on or influenced by the independent variable. An independent variable is an attribute or characteristic that influences or affects on outcome or dependent variable" (Cresswell,

2005:121). From the statement, we can say that the dependent variable of this research was the ability of the students in pronouncing alveopalatal sounds; meanwhile independent one was the use of the technique in improving the students' ability in pronouncing those sounds, in this case minimal pair technique.

The instrument that the writer used in this research was test which can help her to collect the data. This test was referring to the oral test that was conducted twice in pre-test and post-test. Cresswell (2005:285) states, "A pre-test provides a measure on some attribute or characteristic that you assess for participants in an experiment *before* they receive a treatment. A post-test is a measure on some attribute or characteristic that is assessed for participants in an experiment *after* a treatment." It is clear that pre-test is given before the treatment while post-test is given after the writer conducting his/her treatment.

There were 2 kinds of tests in this research. The first part consisting of 10 items was about pronouncing the sounds in individual words. If the students pronounced the sounds correctly, they got score 10 for the first test. The second one was about pronouncing English words in pair consisting of 5 items. The total score for the second test was 10 with 2 points for each number. Total items for both tests were 15 and the total score of the two tests was 20.

Before giving the treatment, the writer gave pre-test to the students in order to know the students' prior knowledge in pronunciation. After that, the writer applied her technique to the experimental group. After giving the treatment for eight meetings, the writer gave post-test to the students. This test is used to know the students' progress after having the treatment.

The writer analyzed the data by using statistical analysis. It was used to know the result of the pre-test and post-test. The individual score of the students was computed by using the formula recommended by Purwanto in Muriadi (2011:25):

$$Np = \frac{R}{SM} \times 100$$

Where:

Np: average score
R: obtained score
SM: maximum score

After getting the individual students' score, the writer computed the mean score of each group by using formula from Hatch and Farhady (1982:55) as follows:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

Where:

$\bar{X}$: average scores
$\sum X$: obtained score
N : total number of students

To find out the result or the effect of the treatment, the writer used the formula proposed by Arikunto (2006:312) as follows:

$$t = \frac{Mx - My}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{\Sigma x^2 + \Sigma y^2}{Nx + Ny - 2}\right)\left(\frac{1}{Nx} + \frac{1}{Ny}\right)}}$$

Where:

Mx : mean of experimental group
My : mean of control group
Σx : sum of square deviation of experimental group
Σy : sum of square deviation of control group
Nx : number of experimental group
Ny : number of control group

FINDINGS

The writer gave pre-test to the experimental group (Class E) on Wednesday, January 8th, 2014. The result of the test can be seen at the table below:

Table 2

Result of Pre-test of the Experimental Group

No.	Students	Obtained Score (0-20)	Maximum Score	Standard Score (0-100)
1.	AD	8	20	40
2.	AA	7	20	35
3.	AK	2	20	10
4.	AI	7	20	35
5.	AZ	5	20	25
6.	AW	6	20	30
7.	AO	10	20	50
8.	GA	11	20	55
9.	CN	6	20	30
10.	GD	12	20	60
11.	DS	9	20	45
12.	DY	8	20	40
13.	DA	0	20	0
14.	ED	9	20	45
15.	EW	0	20	0
16.	FR	10	20	50
17.	FI	5	20	25
18.	HS	3	20	15
19.	IT	3	20	15
20.	PD	4	20	20
21.	RS	8	20	40
22.	SD	13	20	65
23.	TA	7	20	35
24.	TM	5	20	25
25.	VH	1	20	5
26.	WA	4	20	20
27.	YA	8	20	40
28.	TY	9	20	45
	Total	**180**	**-**	$\Sigma x = 900$

To determine the mean score of the test, the writer used the formula which was proposed previously in methodology.

$$\overline{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N} = \frac{900}{28} = \mathbf{32.14}$$

The pre-test for the control group (Class F) was given on Tuesday, January 7th, 2014. The result is shown at the following table:

Table 3

Result of Pre-test of the Control Group

No.	Students	Obtained Score (0-20)	Maximum Score	Standard Score (0-100)
1.	AS	10	20	50
2.	AP	7	20	35
3.	AD	3	20	15
4.	AI	13	20	65
5.	AA	11	20	55
6.	AY	5	20	25
7.	AU	1	20	5
8.	BA	8	20	40
9.	CA	9	20	45
10.	DA	14	20	70
11.	DD	10	20	50
12.	IA	4	20	20
13.	IP	2	20	10
14.	JK	13	20	65
15.	KD	0	20	0
16.	MN	8	20	40
17.	MT	1	20	5
18.	MA	7	20	35
19.	NY	11	20	55
20.	RA	8	20	40
21.	RS	5	20	25
22.	RK	5	20	25
23.	SA	7	20	35
24.	SI	12	20	60
25.	SD	3	20	15
26.	TI	5	20	25
27.	VI	13	20	65
28.	WI	9	20	45
	Total	**204**	**-**	$\Sigma x = 1020$

In determining the mean score of the test, the writer used the formula which has shown in methodology.

$$\overline{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N} = \frac{1020}{28} = \mathbf{36.42}$$

By looking at the two tables above, the writer concluded that the prior knowledge of the students in the control group (36.42) was higher than in the experimental group (32.14).

After giving them the treatment, the writer gave them the second test; post-test. It is used to know the progress of the students after having the treatment. This test was given to the

experimental group (Class E) on Friday, February 7th, 2014. The result of the test is shown at the table below:

Table 4

Result of Post-test of the Experimental Group

No.	Students	Obtained Score (0-20)	Maximum Score	Standard Score (0-100)
1.	AD	19	20	95
2.	AA	17	20	85
3.	AK	16	20	80
4.	AI	19	20	95
5.	AZ	15	20	75
6.	AW	15	20	75
7.	AO	20	20	100
8.	GA	19	20	95
9.	CN	13	20	65
10.	GD	20	20	100
11.	DS	17	20	85
12.	DY	13	20	65
13.	DA	9	20	45
14.	ED	11	20	55
15.	EW	7	20	35
16.	FR	20	20	100
17.	FI	15	20	75
18.	HS	14	20	70
19.	IT	14	20	70
20.	PD	18	20	90
21.	RS	16	20	80
22.	SD	20	20	100
23.	TA	19	20	95
24.	TM	15	20	65
25.	VH	11	20	55
26.	WA	18	20	90
27.	YA	16	20	80
28.	TY	20	20	100
	Total	**446**	**-**	$\Sigma x = 2220$

The writer decides the mean score of the test by using the formula which recommended by Hatch and Farhady (1982:55) as follows:

$$\overline{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N} = \frac{2220}{28} = \mathbf{79.28}$$

The second test was given to the control group (Class F) on Wednesday, February 5th, 2014. Below is the result of the test for control group.

Table 5

Result of Post-test of the Control Group

No.	Students	Obtained Score (0-20)	Maximum Score	Standard Score (0-100)
1.	AS	17	20	85
2.	AP	14	20	70
3.	AD	10	20	50
4.	AI	16	20	80
5.	AA	14	20	70
6.	AY	11	20	55
7.	AU	8	20	40
8.	BA	13	20	65
9.	CA	18	20	90
10.	DA	19	20	95
11.	DD	16	20	80
12.	IA	11	20	55
13.	IP	14	20	70
14.	JK	17	20	85
15.	KD	7	20	35
16.	MN	12	20	60
17.	MT	9	20	45
18.	MA	18	20	90
19.	NY	19	20	95
20.	RA	12	20	60
21.	RS	12	20	60
22.	RK	10	20	50
23.	SA	10	20	50
24.	SI	18	20	90
25.	SD	9	20	45
26.	TI	15	20	75
27.	VI	17	20	85
28.	WI	16	20	80
Total		**382**	**-**	**Σx = 1910**

Based on the table above, there was no student who got the maximum score and there was one student who got the minimum score; 7. The mean score of the test can be seen as follows:

$$\overline{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N} = \frac{1910}{28} = \mathbf{68.21}$$

The mean score of experimental group in post-test was **68.21**. It indicated that it had a significant progress of mean score from **36.42** to **68.21**. In other words, the students could improve their ability in pronunciation after having a treatment.

After calculating the mean score of the students' pre-test and post-test, the writer computed the deviation of the students' score in both pre-test and post-test. The result is shown in the following table.

Table 6

Students' Deviation in Pre-test and Post-test of the Experimental Group

No.	Students	Standard Score		Deviation (d) (Post-Pre)	Square Deviation (d^2)
		Pre-test	Post-test		
1.	AD	40	95	55	3025
2.	AA	35	85	50	2500
3.	AK	10	80	70	4900
4.	AI	35	95	60	3600
5.	AZ	25	75	50	2500
6.	AW	30	75	45	2025
7.	AO	50	100	50	2500
8.	GA	55	95	40	1600
9.	CN	30	65	35	1225
10.	GD	60	100	40	1600
11.	DS	45	85	40	1600
12.	DY	40	65	25	625
13.	DA	0	45	45	2025
14.	ED	45	55	10	100
15.	EW	0	35	35	1225
16.	FR	50	100	50	2500
17.	FI	25	75	50	2500
18.	HS	15	70	55	3025
19.	IT	15	70	55	3025
20.	PD	20	90	70	4900
21.	RS	40	80	40	1600
22.	SD	65	100	35	1225
23.	TA	35	95	60	3600
24.	TM	25	65	40	1600
25.	VH	5	55	50	2500
26.	WA	20	90	70	4900
27.	YA	40	80	40	1600
28.	TY	45	100	55	3025
	Total	**900**	**2220**	**Σd = 1320**	**Σd^2 = 67050**

The mean score deviation of pre-test and post-test of the experimental group was counted as follows:

$$\overline{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N} = \frac{1320}{28} = \mathbf{47.14}$$

Table 7

Students' Deviation in Pre-test and Post-test of the Control Group

No.	Students	Standard Score		Deviation (d) (Post-Pre)	Square Deviation (d^2)
		Pre-test	Post-test		
1.	AS	50	85	35	1225
2.	AP	35	70	35	1225
3.	AD	15	50	35	1225
4.	AI	65	80	15	225
5.	AA	55	70	15	225
6.	AY	25	55	30	900
7.	AU	5	40	35	1225
8.	BA	40	65	25	625
9.	CA	45	90	45	2025
10.	DA	70	95	25	625
11.	DD	50	80	30	900
12.	IA	20	55	35	1225
13.	IP	10	70	60	3600
14.	JK	65	85	20	400
15.	KD	0	35	35	1225
16.	MN	40	60	20	400
17.	MT	5	45	40	1600
18.	MA	35	90	55	3025
19.	NY	55	95	40	1600
20.	RA	40	60	20	400
21.	RS	25	60	35	1225
22.	RK	25	50	25	625
23.	SA	35	50	15	225
24.	SI	60	90	30	900
25.	SD	15	45	30	900
26.	TI	25	75	50	2500
27.	VI	65	85	20	400
28.	WI	45	80	35	1225
	Total	**1020**	**1910**	**Σd = 890**	**Σd^2 = 31900**

The mean score deviation of pre-test and post-test of the control group was calculated at the following ways:

$$\overline{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N} = \frac{890}{28} = \mathbf{31.78}$$

Based on the calculation above, the writer may conclude that there was an effectiveness of the treatment in teaching pronunciation. There was a progress which makes a difference between the students' prior knowledge and the students' knowledge after having the treatment.

In pre-test, the students' pronunciation in control group was better than in experimental group meanwhile, in post-test, the students' score in experimental group was higher than in control group. It means that, if the teachers pay more attention when the students learning English pronunciation, they will be able to speak English well.

After calculating the mean score of the students' pre-test and post-test, the writer computed the deviation of the students' score in both pre-test and post-test. The result of the experimental group was 47.14 while the control group was 31.78. Then, the writer computed the t-test in order to know the significant difference of the students' knowledge before and after having the treatment. Here, the writer found that there was an effectiveness of the technique that was used by her. It can be seen in the result that the $t\text{-}_{counted}$ (4.65) was higher than the $t\text{-}_{table}$ (0,014) and the significance of the research was 4.63.

DISCUSSION

There were eight meetings that the writer had done in conducting her research. It applied in both of class E (experimental group) and class F (control group). Before the writer gave the treatment, she gave pre-test to both classes. It was used to know the students' prior knowledge about pronunciation, especially in pronouncing the alveopalatal sounds; sounds [ʃ], [ʧ], [ʤ], and [ʒ]. The test consisted of 15 numbers divided into 2 kinds of test. The first test was about pronouncing the sound in individual word, while the second one was about pronouncing the words in pair. In doing the test, the students got many difficulties; they were not familiar with the sounds and their tongues were not accustomed to produce the sounds. The result, no one of the students from both groups could get the maximum score. The higher score was only 14 which was gotten by the only one student in the control group. It means that the students' prior knowledge of pronunciation in control group was higher than in experimental group. The writer concluded the students' result by using percentage. The students who were able to produce sound [ʃ] was 18 %, sound [ʧ] was 11 %, sound [ʤ] was 7 %, and sound [ʒ] was only 4 %. The rest, the students who were not able to produce the alveopalatal sounds were about 60 %. By looking at the result, the writer could say that sound [ʒ] was the most difficult sound to be pronounced and the writer could also say that the students' prior knowledge about pronunciation was very poor because there were more than 50 % of the students could not produce the alveopalatal sounds.

After getting the students score in pre-test, the writer gave treatment to the students. The objective of this research was to prove that the use of minimal pairs technique to the seventh grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Balinggi in pronunciation. The treatment that was given to the experimental group used minimal pair technique. Meanwhile, the control group applied the technique that was used by their English teacher. Both of the groups were given different treatment, but both of them were taught the way how to pronounce the alveopalatal sounds. It means both of the group focused on the production of sounds; [ʃ], [ʧ], [ʤ], and [ʒ]. The result of the pre-test indicated that from the four sounds of alveopalatal sounds, there was one sound that was very difficult for the students to pronounce, namely sound [ʒ]. This sound tended to be sound [z] in Indonesian because there was not sound [ʒ] in Indonesian. It was supported by Sahulata (1998) who argues that there were some English sounds which were difficult for the Indonesian learners to pronounce. The reason was that those sounds did not exist in Indonesia, for instance, sounds [ʧ], [ʤ], [ʒ], [θ] and [ð]. Sound [ʒ] was also not found in Balinese. Sudewa (2013) argues that in writing the pure Balinese language, there were only 18 basic syllables that were used. Those sounds are ha, na, ca, ra, ka, da, ta, sa, wa, la, ma, ga, ba, nga, pa, ja, ya, nya. In Balinese, sound [ʒ] tends to be [j] because there was no sound [z] in Balinese. Then, in order to make them feel easy in learning it, the writer asked the students to practice more at home and to pronounce it again and again in every meeting. Finally, they were able to pronounce the sound and ready to have the post-test.

Through minimal pair technique, the students would be easier to differentiate two words in pair which only differ in one sound. It is supported by Fromkin et al, (2003) who argues minimal pair words are two words in pair which have the same sound in the same position but different meaning. In conducting the treatment, the writer taught the students 2 sounds, which have similar sound in every meeting except in the first and the last meeting. For the first meeting, the writer showed all of the alveopalatal sounds to students, to make them familiar with those sounds while for the last meeting, she wanted the students to remember again the pronunciation of all of the sounds that had been taught.

In the last meeting, the students were given post-test. Kinds of the test were the same as the pre-test, but differ on the words that were used. When the students did the post-test, they felt more enjoyable because they had a treatment. They were also had been familiar with the alveopalatal sounds. Both of the groups were given different treatments, thus they obtained

different score. In pre-test, the control group got higher score than the experimental group, but in post-test, the higher score was obtained by the experimental group. Then, the writer may say that the technique used for the experimental group was effective. In order to know the students' result, the writer counted them by using percentage of the students' score in post-test. There were 32 % students who could pronounce the sound [ʃ], 50 % for the sounds [ʧ] and [ʤ], 18 % for the sound [ʒ] and there was no student who could not pronounce the alveopalatal sounds. Therefore, we could say that minimal pair technique could significantly improve the students' knowledge in pronunciation especially in pronouncing the alveopalatal sounds.

Some writers have done their research by using the same technique. The results were successful. Maranu (2013), one of the English Department students, applied minimal pairs technique on the pronunciation of alveopalatal consonants. The result of her research showed that technique used by her was effective because the value of the $t\text{-}_{counted}$ was higher than the $t\text{-}_{table}$.

The previous writer and this recent writer had done their research by using the same technique; that is minimal pairs. They also had the same topic; focusing on the pronunciation of alveopalatal sounds. The differences are; the previous writer focused on alveopalatal consonants in English, but this recent research taught the students how to pronounce the alveopalatal sounds in English and also how to differentiate the pronunciation of those sounds in three languages; they are Balinese, Indonesian, and English. The last differentiation is the subject that was used. The previous writer used the eighth grade students meanwhile, this recent research used the seventh grade students in Junior High School.

The result of this recent research was as successful as the previous research. This statement was formulated by looking for the result of the data analysis. The $t\text{-}_{counted}$ of this recent research was higher than the $t\text{-}_{table}$. It means that the technique that was used in this recent research was effective to be used in teaching pronunciation, especially in pronouncing the alveopalatal sounds.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

After discussing and analyzing the data, the writer then draws some conclusions which are presented as follow:

The result of data analysis showed that minimal pair technique is effective to be used in teaching and learning pronunciation. There is a significant improvement after the writer taught the seventh grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Balinggi by using this technique. On the other word, it can be concluded that the hypothesis was accepted.

Minimal pair technique can be used to the students to solve their problem in learning pronunciation and also may help them to increase their ability in pronouncing the English words correctly. It is used to show the different pronunciation of two words focusing on one sound.

Based on the conclusion above, the writer would like to offer some suggestions that might be useful in teaching and learning pronunciation. First, the teacher can use this technique in improving the students' ability in pronunciation especially in distinguishing two words focusing on one sound. Second, the writer expects the students have to practice more in order to make their ability in pronunciation be improved, especially in pronouncing the English words. Finally, for the next writers, they have to master their technique before applying it.

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